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The Eclipse of the Markan Narrative

On the (Re)cognition of a Coherent Story and Implications for Genre

In diesem Aufsatz wird gezeigt, dass sowohl textliche als auch kontextuelle Hinweise das Markusevangelium als eine kohärente Erzählung erscheinen lassen. Die Argumentation setzt zunächst mit einer Definition von „Erzählung" sowie einem auf soziokulturellen und mentalen Prozessen basierenden Modell der Textproduktion und -rezeption ein. Im Anschluss richtet sich die Aufmerksamkeit auf die textlichen Anhaltspunkte, die sich für eine erzählerische Kohärenz des Markusevangeliums anführen lassen. Schließlich wird argumentiert, dass die Kohärenz der Erzählung zugleich der markinischen Gattungsvermittlung dient. Wenngleich unterschiedliche soziale und kulturelle Rahmenbedingungen unweigerlich eine gewisse Rezeptionsvielfalt des Markusevangeliums begünstigen, lassen die textlichen Hinweise die Rezipienten erkennen, dass der Evangelist ihnen eine biblische, apokalyptisch-eschatologische Geschichte erzählt, die er unter dem Begriff des εὐαγγέλιον zusammenfasst.

Keywords: Gospel of Mark, narrative, genre, gospel, cognitive approach, coherence

The Gospel of Mark enjoyed the status of a unified narrative after the literary turn altered the hermeneutical landscape of biblical studies.[1] Petri Merenlahti attributes this status to the interpretative force of narrative criticism, which emerged at the time.[2] Indeed, the authors of what became the premier narratological textbook for Mark's Gospel state that "our study reveals Mark's narrative to be of remarkably whole cloth […]. The unity of this Gospel is apparent in the integrity of the story it tells, which gives a

1 For an overview of the literary turn in biblical studies and how it has shaped New Testament interpretation, see E.E. Shively, "Literary Approaches," in *Cambridge Companion to the New Testament*, ed. S.B. Chapman and M.A. Sweeney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 369–381; M.A. Powell, *What Is Narrative Criticism? A New Approach to the Bible* (London: SPCK, 1993); S.D. Moore, *Literary Criticism and the Gospels: The Theoretical Challenge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

2 P. Merenlahti, *Poetics for the Gospels? Rethinking Narrative Criticism* (London: T&T Clark, 2002), 17–19. Prior scholarship in biblical studies, however, contributed to the development of narrative criticism. See Shively, "Literary Approaches" (see n. 1).

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powerful rhetorical impact."[3] Merenlahti believes, however, that the unity of the gospel narratives is not so obvious because, in his estimation, this is a function of its interpretation.[4] The coherence of Mark's narrative seems especially vulnerable in view of reception history, particularly the evaluation of early readers like Luke (Luke 1:1–4) and Papias (recorded in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.35.15). Luke implicitly addresses the incoherence he perceives in the attempts of his predecessors – which would have included Mark – by juxtaposing his orderly narrative with theirs: "Since (ἐπειδήπερ) many have attempted to write a narrative (διήγησιν) of the events that have been fulfilled among us […] so also it seemed good to me […] to write an orderly [narrative] for you" (1:1, 3). Then, Papias and the elder he cites explicitly address a perceived incoherence of Mark's Gospel by explaining and defending Mark's disorderly writing as the result of his commitment accurately to record his memory of Peter's preaching. Merenlahti draws on this early reception in his evaluation of the evangelists' purpose and structure.[5] In his view, Mark, perhaps more than the other gospels, is an ideological text which values the communication of truth over the artistic shaping of a coherent narrative.[6] Thus, we should acknowledge Mark's uneven organization as a function of the evangelist's aims.

Helen Bond and Matthew D.C. Larsen view Mark's uneven organization as a function of its genre or form. On the one hand, Bond demonstrates the implications of reading Mark as Greco-Roman biography. She shows how the gospel is structured as "largely a patchwork of short episodes – stories, sayings, and dialogues"[7] consistent with the organization of topically-arranged biographies. Bond believes that Mark's structure is most similar to Lucian's *Demonax* (2nd cent. CE) which is mostly "given over to a series of unconnected, brief anecdotes" until the end, when the death scene is told chronologically.[8] Bond concludes that Mark is a "literary composition"[9] with "nothing strange about his ordering of material" and is "rather more

3 D. Rhoads, J. Dewey, and D. Michie, *Mark as Story: Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 3–4. Christopher W. Skinner discusses the legacy of *Mark as Story* with its focus on Mark as a unified narrative in "Telling the Story: The Appearance and Impact of Mark as Story," in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. C.W. Skinner and K.R. Iverson, RBS 65 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2011), 1–28.

4 Merenlahti, *Poetics for the Gospels?* (see n. 2), 33.

5 Merenlahti, *Poetics for the Gospels?* (see n. 2), 17–34, esp. 32.

6 Merenlahti, *Poetics for the Gospels?* (see n. 2), 32.

7 H.K. Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus: Genre and Meaning in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2020), 99.

8 Bond, *First Biography* (see n. 7), 101.

9 Bond, *First Biography* (see n. 7), 88.

carefully composed than many biographies" through topically and chiastically arranged anecdotes.[10] Larsen, on the other hand, argues that Mark is an unfinished collection of notes (*hypomnemata*) and then demonstrates the implications of reading Mark like other note collections, which are organized "by keyword and topic."[11] Larsen comes to a conclusion opposite to Bond's, which is that Mark's Gospel "is not a piece of literature" at all and "not a narrative, biography or history (at least not yet)."[12] Nevertheless, Larsen and Bond agree that Mark's status as a non-continuous, episodic narrative (Bond)[13] or a non-narrative (Larsen) is a function of its genre or form.

Merenlahti, Bond, and Larsen are right to bind Mark's aims and structure to Mark's genre/form. I wish to push further, however, in demonstrating how Mark's narrative (the discourse or text type) is bound to its genre (text form). For instance, rather than isolate "narrative" or διήγησις per se (i.e., Mark is/is not "a narrative"), it is more accurate to recognize that ancient Greeks narrated or embedded narration in a variety of genres including historiography, poetry, drama, and speaking/oratory; and that they tied standards of narrative coherence to genre expectations.[14] Moreover, genres of Hebrew narrative (among other kinds) provided important models for narrative/storytelling outside (or alongside) Greco-Roman literary models. Given the variety in narrating and modelling, the early reception of Mark tells us more about Luke's and Papias's (and the elder's) standards of coherence for narrativizing the traditions about Jesus than about Mark's own standards or intentions.[15]

10 Bond, *First Biography* (see n. 7), 102.

11 M.D.C. Larsen, *Gospels before the Book* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 127–135.

12 Larsen, *Gospels before the Book* (see n. 11), 7. See Werner H. Kelber's adaptation of Larsen's view in "On 'Mastering the Genre,'" in *Modern and Ancient Literary Criticism of the Gospels*, ed. R.M. Calhoun, D.P. Moessner, and T. Nicklas, WUNT 451 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 57–76, here 67–74.

13 See also C. Breytenbach, "The Gospel of Mark as 'Episodic Narrative,'" in *The Gospel of Mark as Episodic Narrative*, NovTSup 182 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 11–40.

14 De Jong and Nünlist observe this phenomenon as a refrain that runs through the essays on various genres in their volume (co-edited with A. Bowie) *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*, Mnemosyne, Suppl. 257 (Leiden: Brill, 2004); cf. their essay "Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature," ibid., 545–553, here 546.

15 Some have suggested that Papias's standards are the result of his comparison of Mark with another of the gospels, for example, J.S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Traditions* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 53: "The most probable explanation for the elder's apologia on Mark's behalf is not that in itself Mark gave the impression of an incomplete and disorganized account, but that when compared

In what follows, I do two things. First, I define "narrative" to contextualize my subsequent discussion. Then, I flip the order of analysis to begin with an examination of Mark's own textual cues before discussing implications for Mark's genre. I will show that Mark is a unified narrative that functions in the "telling" of a particular genre, with its situation and purpose, and therefore that it entails features that "narrative" in another generic frame would not exhibit (conversely, it does *not* entail features that "narrative" in another generic frame would be expected to exhibit). My thesis is that the Second Gospel is recognizable as a coherent narrative of "good news." To make my argument, I perform a close reading of Mark and employ a culturally informed cognitive model of textual production and reception.[16]

1 Approaching Narrative

Storytelling has featured across cultures since the Bronze Age. This is because narrative imagining (i. e., putting agents with actions in sequence) is fundamental to the way we make sense of the world.[17] As Jerome Bruner comments, "we organize our experience and memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative – stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on."[18] It is no wonder that screenwriter John Yorke identifies a recognizable archetypal story structure that forms "the elements that come together to shape the skeleton of almost every story we see, read, or hear."[19] Indeed, common features of human cognition and

with another gospel which had both a different arrangement and more material, Mark appeared deficient."

16 I am not concerned with hypothetical prior traditions or sources, but with Mark's Gospel in the written form we have it.

17 W. Kintsch, *Comprehension: A Paradigm for Cognition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 27–29, discusses four overlapping levels of mental models involved in human cognition: episodic/event memory, imitation, narrative/story/myth, and the theoretical.

18 J. Bruner, "The Narrative Construction of Reality," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1991), 1–21, here 4. This research is harmonious with social memory theory by which some recent biblical scholars explain both the transmission of the Jesus tradition and the interpretation of the Gospel narratives. See, e. g., S. Huebenthal, *Reading Mark's Gospel as a Text from Collective Memory* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2020).

19 J. Yorke, *Into the Woods: How Stories Work and Why We Tell Them* (London: Penguin, 2013), 20. I am grateful to Loveday Alexander for bringing this book to my attention.

storytelling suggest common mental processing strategies.[20] Yet, storytelling is also always rooted in sociocultural contexts and discourse communities that share ways of understanding and telling.[21]

Thus, from the fifth century BCE, Greek philosophers articulated culturally framed conventions about what human beings have always done: tell stories. Plato understood διήγησις (narrative) as the telling of "past, present, or future" events (*Resp.* 393d–394d), and described a tripartite model that tied various forms of narrative representation to specific genres: (1) telling through "pure" διήγησις[22] tied to poem or choral hymn; (2) telling through μίμησις[23] (representation) tied to drama; and (3) telling through a mixed form tied to Homeric epic. Like all genres, these (poetry, drama, epic) were recognizable because of shared conventions within a discourse community due to their recurrent use in the situations that required them.[24] The discourse type, situation, and purpose were genre-linked as a matter of convention.

Aristotle developed Plato's theory in at least two ways. First, he prioritized μίμησις over διήγησις. According to Aristotle, genres (epic and tragic poetry, comedy, choral lyric) are various kinds of μίμησις, that is, representations of events or "people in action," with narrative as one of the modes by which genres accomplish μίμησις (*Poet.* 1447a–b). Second, Aristotle articulated the unified structure of a plot (μῦθος) as that which represents the events or "the arrangement of the incidents" in a causal sequence (*Poet.* 1450a; 1452a), providing a particular theoretical model for

20 Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 205, comments that, "My hypothesis is that the comprehension processes, the basic strategies, the role of knowledge and experience, as well as the memory products generated, are the same for literary texts as for the simple narratives and descriptive texts we have used in our research. That is not to say that there is no difference, but the difference is in the 'what,' not the 'how.'"

21 *Discourse communities* are groups that are "defined in relation to their uses of language and texts" which is "a fluid matter as we shift from role to role in the course of our lives" (P. Stockwell, *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. [London: Routledge, 2019], 23).

22 A direct representation of events through a narrator's telling.

23 An indirect representation of events through dramatic expression.

24 To be clear, genres (like texts) do not simply "exist." Instead, "genres" are mental representations of "a relationship between the textual structures and the situations that occasion them" (J. Frow, *Genre*, 2nd ed., The New Critical Idiom [London: Routledge, 2015], 14). This definition combines a cognitive and socio-rhetorical approach to genre. The latter approach builds on the work of C.R. Miller, "Genre as Social Action," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984), 151–167, who develops an action-oriented view of genre, focusing on professional activity, for instance, tax accounting. See also K. Jamieson, "Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraint," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61 (1975), 406–415.

the sort of narrative imagining we do every day.[25] Unsurprisingly, Aristotle was critical of episodic plots: "Of simple plots and actions, the episodic are the worst. By 'episodic' I mean a plot in which the episodes follow one another without probability or necessity" (*Poet.* 1451b). Thus, a proper plot should hang together as a cohesive whole. I will argue that Mark's Gospel is more cohesive and less episodic (by Aristotle's definition).

Subsequently, ancient Greeks employed the term διήγησις and/or narrative techniques in the communication of a variety of genres, from oratory to choral lyric to drama to epic poetry to historiography to the novel.[26] In particular, διήγησις – akin to Plato's "plain narrative" – was tied to the presentation of historical writing. Theon's *Progymnasmata* (1st cent. CE), for example, articulates conventions for narrativity in speaking and writing, beginning with the definition of narrative:[27]

> Narrative (διήγησις) is language descriptive of things that have happened or as though they had happened. Elements of narration (διήγησις) are six: the *person*, whether that be one or many; and the *action* done by the person; and the *place* where the action was done; and the *time* at which it was done; and the *manner* of the action; and sixth, the *cause* of these things.[28]

Theon then elaborates on genre-linked elements of the narration of *historical writing*, which should include details about ancestors, parents, accomplishments, dates, and so on. Theon also presents a reading list of historians who exhibited the sort of narrative presentation that should be imitated. Ivan Matijašić demonstrates that Theon's canon of historians is comparable to the historiographical canons of Cicero, Dionysius, Quintilian, as well as those of other *progymnasmata:* Plato and Aristotle provided the theory; historians like Thucydides and Herodotus provided the

25 See the larger discussion in *Poet.* 1448a–1450a. Plato and Aristotle used these terms differently, as J.T. Kirby, "Mimesis and Diegesis: Foundations of Aesthetic Theory in Plato and Aristotle," *Helios* 18 (1991), 113–128, here 118, explains: "For Plato, diegesis is the genus, and mimesis determines the differentiae; the opposite is true in Aristotle. Because of their different goals, they structure the hierarchy differently."

26 For a discussion of the use of διήγησις in various scholia to identify the narration of elements in drama, speech in epic poetry, and choral odes, see R. Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 94–115. For a discussion of the use of narrative techniques in various genres, see the essays in De Jong, Nünlist, and Bowie, *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives* (see n. 14).

27 Cf. I. Matijašić, *Shaping the Canons of Ancient Greek Historiography* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018), 161.

28 Theon, *Progymnasmata* 5 (trans. G.A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, WGRW 10 [Atlanta: SBL Press, 2003], 28; my emphases).

models for imitation.[29] Narrative presentation in historical writing was thus typified through Greco-Roman rhetorical education. No doubt, the historiographical canons represented what their makers recognized to be important and could never account for all literary influences. Nevertheless, rhetorical education represented not only a conventional literary practice, but also a social practice of speaking, reading, and writing.[30] Thus, if someone were to narrate history (or biography) in the Greco-Roman world, they would be inclined to imitate these models if they wished their writing to be recognized and therefore to succeed. In fact, Jewish writers such as Josephus and Philo do just that.[31]

Luke also overtly imitates Greco-Roman models in writing Luke-Acts. The Gospel of Luke begins with a conventional prologue, in which Luke distinguishes his own work from that of his predecessors, gives his credentials, and states his purpose. David Moessner compares Luke's writing to Dionysius of Halicarnassus's critique of Thucydides's standards for narrative-writing and concludes, "Luke promotes his enterprise as meeting the Hellenistic standard of narrative performance that delivers the clarity of comprehension that, theoretically, in some circles at least, not even a Thucydides could adequately accomplish."[32] Subsequently, Luke narrates the expected elements of Greco-Roman historiography, including details of Jesus's birth, ancestry, parents, nurture, education, as well as "speeches, travel accounts (περιήγησεις), dramatic episodes, sea voyages (περίπλους), letters, summaries, synchronisms, digressions (ἔκβασεις), and parallelisms."[33]

Like his predecessors, Luke is a second-hander who received a tradition that goes back to a beginning that he himself did not directly witness (1:2).

29 Matijašić, *Shaping the Canons* (see n. 27).

30 C. Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 489.

31 Catherine Hezser notes that while reading Greek was common among Jews, writing was much less widespread and associated with scribes who had varying levels of proficiency. See Hezser, *Jewish Literacy* (see n. 30), 1–109, 449–495, for a discussion of the Greek education of Jews and the processes and contexts of their reading and writing, especially Josephus. See also ead., "Private and Public Education," in *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine*, ed. C. Hezser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 465–481. M. Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria: An Intellectual Biography*, AYBRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 1–172, discusses Philo's adoption of Greco-Roman literary conventions once he arrives in Rome.

32 D.P. Moessner, "The Triadic Synergy of Hellenistic Poetics in the Narrative Epistemology of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Authorial Intent of the Evangelist Luke (Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–8)," *Neot* 42 (2008), 289–303, here 298.

33 D.P. Moessner, *Luke the Historian of Israel's Legacy, Theologian of Israel's "Christ": A New Reading of the "Gospel Acts" of Luke*, BZNW 182 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 51.

Unlike his predecessors, however, Luke adds to his credentials by indicating that he is also a first-hander who has become "thoroughly familiar" (παρηκολουθηκότι) through personal engagement with all events, "from the first" (ἄνωθεν).[34] On the basis of these credentials, Luke is fully qualified to rewrite and *expand* the tradition he has received. While later readers would separate Luke and Acts,[35] *Luke* envisions two volumes based on the tradition with which he has become thoroughly familiar. Over the two volumes, Luke will provide Theophilus with certainty about the tradition he has already received (1:4; cf. 1:2) by narrating how the "events that have been fulfilled"[36] (cf. Mark 1:14–15) continue to move towards a larger goal: the history of God's people as the history for all people.[37] Moessner argues that "by the use of obvious *historiographical* literary forms and conventions, Luke is deliberately presenting this movement to a larger audience in a clearly understandable form in order to show the world-wide significance of a group [i. e., Israel] which claims its origins in an ancient people and professes its relevance for all of human history."[38] Luke's narration, situation, and purpose are thus genre-linked to Greco-Roman historiography, but with a twist. Luke locates the appearance of Jesus within Israel's history and blends conventions of the Jewish scriptures with Greco-Roman ones to narrate a particular sort of history-writing recognizable across cultures.[39]

Like Luke, Mark locates the appearance of Jesus within Israel's history and employs the Jewish classics (the scriptures); but unlike Luke, Mark does not overtly present the expected literary conventions of Greco-Roman historiography or biography.[40] For instance, Mark includes no typical

34 See Moessner, *Luke the Historian* (see n. 33), 106–107; id., "Luke as Tradent and Hermeneut: 'As one who has a thoroughly informed familiarity with all the events from the top' (Luke 1:3)," *NovT* 58 (2016), 259–300.

35 L.T. Johnson, "Literary Criticism of Luke-Acts: Is Reception-History Pertinent?," *JSNT* 28 (2005), 159–162, here 159–160, questions the value of marshalling patristic writings as evidence against reading Luke-Acts as a literary unity.

36 Πληρόω, Luke 4:21; 9:3; 21:24; 22:16; 24:44.

37 Moessner, *Luke the Historian* (see n. 33), 104. See Acts 1:16; 3:18; 12:25; 14:26; 19:21, which refer to the things that have been "accomplished" (πληρόω).

38 Moessner, *Luke the Historian* (see n. 33), 51.

39 Moessner, *Luke the Historian* (see n. 33), 33–38, 50. Alternatively, Sean A. Adams argues that Luke-Acts is a form of ancient biography, with Luke as a biography of Jesus and Acts as "collected biography" of Jesus' disciples; cf. S.A. Adams, *Greek Genres and Jewish Authors: Negotiating Literary Culture in the Greco-Roman Era* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2020), 257–274; id., *The Genre of Acts and Collected Biography*, SNTSMS 156 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

40 Bond, *First Biography* (see n. 7), 91, muses that Mark's "decision to write a biography – a literary form that was immensely popular within the Greco-Roman world and yet

prologue; and no conventional account of Jesus's birth, ancestry, parents, education, nurture, and so on. This is not to say that Mark does not employ some recognizable Greek literary conventions (e.g., *chreia*); but if Mark meant to narrate as a Hellenistic historian or biographer, then he was awfully subtle about it. It may be this sort of subtlety that Luke critiques in his opening verses. Alternatively, it may be that Luke's rhetorical purpose is to highlight his own narrative aims, which differ from Mark's. Whatever the case may be, the point is, quite simply, that Mark falls short as a διήγησις *according to the standards of Hellenistic historiography that Luke assumes*; but this does not mean Mark is not a coherent narrative, because, as I have demonstrated, writers could narrate a variety of genres and for a variety of purposes.

In the remainder of the article, I wish to look at the extent to which Mark is recognizable as a narrative text according to Mark's own cues, and then draw out implications for understanding Mark's genre. I build on classical beginnings to follow the conventional distinction between "narrative" as discourse-type (or text-type) and "genre" as text-form.[41] From a narratological perspective, "a narrative text is a text in which a narrative agent tells a story,"[42] with the arrangement of events and agents in a temporal sequence of cause-and-effect. I also draw on a cognitive definition to view a narrative text as a *mental model* that readers build in the process of reading. Mental models are hypothetical mental images (like "thought bubbles") that we draw on in real time, which serve as "recipes for generating organizational structures in a particular task context."[43] Mental models allow us to retrieve prototypical knowledge from memory so that we know how to explain and predict what we encounter in social and textual contexts. Crucially, our mental models – and their prototypical inputs – are em-

strangely uncommon within Jewish circles – may also suggest an attempt to appeal to the sorts of people who were familiar with this type of literature." Yet she repeatedly observes how unconventional Mark's structure and content are – for example, the abrupt opening, lack of prologue, lack of authorial comments about Jesus's virtues and appearance, use of Septuagintal themes and texts rather than Greek ones, and so on (see ibid., 9–166). Moreover, Bond identifies Mark's characterization and internal structure with Greek literary techniques (e.g., *synkrisis*); however, similar techniques appear in Hebrew narrative (analogical patterning).

41 For a challenge to the conventional models, see M. Fludernik, "Genres, Text Types, or Discourse Modes? Narrative Modalities and Generic Categorization," *Style* 34 (2000), 274–292.

42 M. Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 16.

43 Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 37.

bedded in culture and generated by situations.[44] When we read to form mental models of texts, we recruit two types of input: textual information, and prior knowledge and experience (cultural frames) held in memory.[45]

A *narrative text* (discourse-type) is a "rhetorical superstructure" for the whole.[46] *Genre* (text-form) is a mental model of a textual macrostructure which accomplishes purposeful communication in a social situation through the discourse-type (e. g., *narrative*).[47] For an ancient reader (or any reader) to take up and read Mark's Gospel is simultaneously to construct its discourse-type and text-form. To varying degrees, writers use textual elements – words, sentences, semantic and syntactical relationships, themes, content, style, rhetoric, and so on – to suggest textual coherence to and have an effect on their intended readers.[48] Textual cues suggest mental models that help readers organize what they encounter ("top down" processing); but then as readers read in real time, they hold textual elements in working memory and integrate one element with the next ("bottom up" processing).[49] Readers refine and revise their mental model of texts by drawing on prior textual and social knowledge to fill gaps and indeterminacies.[50] This process includes instances of automatic gap-filling through the retrieval of textual information from working memory to guide the reading process.[51]

44 "One cannot have symbolic thought in an individual mind, only in a mind that is part of a certain culture" (Kintsch, *Comprehension* [see n. 17], 29). See also W.A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities*, Classical Culture and Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 603 (cf. p. 9): "reading is not simply the cognitive process by the individual of the 'technology' of writing, but rather *the negotiated construction of meaning within a particular sociocultural context.*" Here, Johnson contrasts the individual cognitive process of reading with the social event level of meaning-construction. In my view, however, the social and cognitive dimensions of reading are not easily disentangled.

45 "Typically […] the mental text representation is a mixture of text-derived and knowledge-derived information, not necessarily in equal parts" (Kintsch, *Comprehension* [see n. 17], 105; see also 119–120).

46 For mental models of text types as "rhetorical superstructures," see Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 67. See also M. Fludernik, *Natural Narratology* (London: Routledge, 1996), 357.

47 Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 67; Fludernik, *Narratology* (see n. 46), 44.

48 Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 206.

49 Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 101. See also M. Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 186–229, who addresses gap-filling in the process of reading Hebrew biblical narrative.

50 See further W. Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach," *New Literary History* 3.2 (1972), 279–299; id., *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 110–113, 163–179.

51 "For instance, readers of *The clouds gathered quickly, and it became ominously dark. The downpour lasted only 10 minutes* infer the causal antecedent *the clouds caused the rain.*

If, for example, new textual elements conflict with readers' mental model of "Mark as narrative" or "as narration of history," they will either refine and incorporate those elements into and update that mental model, or discard the model for another. A reader's natural goal is the comprehension of a coherent mental model,[52] and so to recognize Mark as a *narrative* telling of a certain form depends on the extent to which readers comprehend it to be coherent as such.

2 Mark as a Narrative Text

I seek to identify *textual information* that facilitates the recognition of Mark as a coherent narrative. I acknowledge that a full analysis should account not only for textual elements, but also for diverse elements of readers' prior knowledge, situation, and context. Here, however, my primary interest is to determine the extent to which Mark employs textual cues to communicate a coherent narrative text model. In this regard, features of Hebrew narrative are significant. While these features are not unique to biblical narrative, they are nevertheless notable and consistent. These include the temporal ordering of non-chronological sequences, causal ordering, and analogical patterning.[53] This third element is particularly important and requires some explanation:[54]

> Analogy is an essentially spatial pattern, composed of at least two elements (two characters, events, strands of action, etc.) between which there is at least one point of similarity and one of dissimilarity: the similarity affords the basis for the spatial linkage and confrontation of the analogical elements, whereas the dissimilarity makes for their mutual illumination, qualification, or simply concretization.[55]

Analogical patterning includes "parallelism, contrast, variation, recurrence, symmetry, [and] chiasm."[56] This sort of patterning may appear on

But given *The clouds gathered quickly, and it became ominously dark*, they do not infer the consequent *the clouds caused rain*" (Kintsch, *Comprehension* [see n. 17], 194–195). For a discussion of the difference between proper inferences and automatic knowledge retrieval, see ibid., 189–199.

52 Kintsch, *Comprehension* (see n. 17), 103.

53 See Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (see n. 49), 39.

54 Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (see n. 49), 39.

55 Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (see n. 49), 365. See further id., "Ordering the Unordered: Time, Space, and Descriptive Coherence," *Yale French Studies* 61 (1981), 60–88, here 65.

56 Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (see n. 49), 39.

any level of the narrative, from a mere sound to the whole plot;[57] and may be completed within a single episode or flank an entire book. Analogies include episodes in which Abraham says that Sarah is his sister; the elevation of the younger brother; juxtapositions of characters like Nabal and Abigail, Reuben and Judah, Uriah and David, David and Saul, and Jacob and Esau. Crucially, analogical patterning is a structuring device that creates *narrative coherence.*

The Gospel of Mark is notoriously difficult to outline because of the "multiple overlapping structures and sequences" that encourage nonlinear reading.[58] Nevertheless, this structuring does not preclude a continuous or linear reading, nor the recognition of Mark as a narrative text. Space prevents me from looking at the entire Gospel, so as a point of departure I use Larsen's comments about Mark 6:32–8:21 that, "[r]ead in succession, the stories do not hang together tightly from the perspective of an episodic narrative, with each pericope leading seemingly into the next."[59] I will thus examine Mark 6:32–8:21 as a test case.

I begin by noting that the feeding of the multitude (6:32–44) is tied to the prior episode, in which Jesus calls his disciples to a deserted place by themselves to get away from the hounding crowds (δεῦτε ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ κατ' ἰδίαν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον, v. 31). Analogical patterning through the repetition of language connects that scene with the episode under consideration. The language is repeated as Jesus and his disciples get into the boat and go to a deserted place by themselves (ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν, v. 32). The crowd follows them, however, and interrupts their retreat.

Mark identifies the boat on which Jesus and his disciples embark with an article (v. 32). If an unidentified or new boat were in view, we would expect an unmarked, or anarthrous noun.[60] Instead, the marked, or arthrous "boat" (ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ) points back to the episode in which Jesus first retreated with his disciples to the sea and asked them to prepare a boat (ἵνα πλοιάριον προσκαρτερῇ αὐτῷ, 3:9) onto which he initially embarked to teach the crowd from the sea (εἰς πλοῖον ἐμβάντα, 4:1). There, the nouns are anarthrous and placed in a position of prominence, before the verb, to

57 The patterning may occur with "a sound, semantic feature, word, situation, theme, [or] generic quality" (Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative* [see n. 49], 366).

58 J. Dewey, "Mark as Interwoven Tapestry: Forecasts and Echoes for a Listening Audience," *CBQ* 53 (1991), 221–236, here 224.

59 Larsen, *Gospels before the Book* (see n. 11), 132.

60 S.H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on Its Information Structure and Other Devices*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: SIL International, 2000), §§ 9.2.1; 9.2.3; 9.3.

introduce a new entity which has not yet appeared in the narrative: a boat. Subsequently, Jesus travels back and forth on the sea in "the boat." The subsequent use of the article points back to the fact that the boat has been identified in the discourse already (arthrous nouns in 4:35, 37 [2×]; 5:2, 18, 21; 6:32, 45, 47, 51, 54; 8:10, 14).[61] The series of arthrous nouns facilitates the perception that Jesus and his disciples use the same boat throughout his travels. Analogical patterning ties the "boat scenes" together because they share themes of revelation and unbelief.

Moreover, the retrieval of prior textual information recalls the events that have led up to this point at which Jesus travels "on the boat" and the articulation of a causal sequence. First, because of Jesus's opening act of teaching and exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue Mark reports that "his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee" (1:29–30). Mark connects this opening act to the next episode, for Jesus leaves the synagogue to enter the house where he heals Simon's mother-in-law (v. 31). Because of this healing, "the whole city was gathered around the door" (v. 32). Jesus retreats from the crowd to a deserted place to pray (εἰς ἔρημον τόπον, v. 35), but Simon Peter and his friends find him and report, "everyone is searching for you" (v. 37). Jesus replies, "Let us go to the neighboring towns so that I may proclaim the message there also for that is what I came out to do (εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ *ἐξῆλθον*)" (v. 38, cf. *ἦλθεν* ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ, 1:14). As a result, Jesus goes throughout Galilee with his disciples, preaching and casting out demons (1:39). Yet because of this activity, he cannot move around openly and is increasingly mobbed by crowds seeking healing and swarming the places he stays (1:32–33; 2:1–2; 3:7–8). These events build up to the point at which Jesus asks his disciples to prepare a boat so that he can escape from the crowds (3:9). Subsequently, they travel "in that boat," eventually bringing us to Mark 6:32.

After the feeding of the multitude, Jesus continues to travel in the boat, back and forth across the sea. He "made his disciples get into the boat (εἰς τὸ πλοῖον) and go on ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida." But Jesus stays behind, dismisses the crowd he just fed, and climbs a mountain to pray (6:45–46). Later that day, "when evening came, the boat (τὸ πλοῖον)" with the disciples was out on the sea, and Jesus was alone on the land (v. 47). An additional temporal cue indicates the passing of time: and "about the fourth

61 Compare Mark 4:36b, in which a new reference to other boats is also placed in a position of prominence and anarthrous: καὶ ἄλλα πλοῖα ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ. I am grateful to Steven Runge for drawing this to my attention.

watch of the night" (v. 48), Jesus intended to walk past them on the water as they struggled to control the boat. But they were afraid and did not recognize him. A causal explanation further ties this episode with the last one: "And they were utterly astounded for (γάρ) they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened" (vv. 51b–52).

The next episode is connected to the feeding of the multitude with temporal and geographical cues: "when they had crossed over (καὶ διαπεράσαντες),[62] they came to land at Gennesaret and moored [the boat]" (v. 53). People continue to recognize and run after Jesus (v. 54). His fame has continued to grow during his ministry around the sea, as it has since he first ordered the boat (3:7), indeed, since the beginning of his ministry.

No temporal marker introduces the conflict over purity in Mark 7:1–23; however, the episode begins with the note that some Pharisees and scribes had "come from Jerusalem" (v. 1), facilitating the perception of geographical coherence with the setting of Jesus's Galilean ministry. The retrieval of prior textual knowledge recalls that some scribes "came down from Jerusalem" (3:22) to challenge Jesus in Galilee when the crowd had grown to the point that "they could not even eat" (3:20; cf. 6:31). This suggests that Mark 6:53–56 establishes the inciting incident for the arrival of Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem: Jesus's growing fame. In addition, exhibiting analogical patterning, the vocabulary and motifs tie this episode with and develop what precedes. That is, for the Pharisees and scribes, as for Jesus's disciples earlier, the failure to recognize Jesus's identity and authority is tied to their failure to understand Jesus's activity regarding bread, because of their hard hearts (7:5–8; cf. 6:51–52). This connection facilitates the comparison of the two groups and stimulates a "gap-filling" exercise that develops the nature of the disciples' growing imperception as like that of Jesus's opponents. That is, Jesus's disciples, like his opponents, are on the "outside" (cf. 4:10–12 with vv. 35–41; cf. 3:31).

An adverb ties a new setting to the preceding Galilean one: "*From there* (ἐκεῖθεν) he [Jesus] set out and went away to the region of Tyre" (7:24). Jesus retreats to a house and does not want anyone to know he is there. Prior textual information indicates that people from Tyre and Sidon have already sought Jesus on one occasion (3:8), and suggests that the Gerasene man went around the Decapolis telling others about his healing (5:20). The integration of this information with knowledge from the immediately preceding episodes suggests that Jesus retreats to the house to seek rest

62 The participle is best taken temporally.

(recall Mark 6:30–33, 45–56). Now, however, he is interrupted not by a whole crowd, but by a solitary woman.

Jesus's retreat and subsequent interruption is activity consistent with that described in the immediately preceding episodes and therefore facilitates coherence. The use of prior motifs (feeding, purity, parables) create analogical patterns that strengthen coherence. The first half of Mark 7:24–30 narrates the gentile woman's indirect plea for Jesus to cast out a demon from her daughter (vv. 24–26). The second half of the episode recounts a parabolic dialogue built on a "feeding" metaphor between Jesus and the woman (vv. 27–28). Jesus responds to the woman as if she is an undiscerning outsider by telling her a parable. His response to her fits with his earlier stated practice, in which those "outside" receive everything in parables without the illuminating instruction reserved for his disciples (4:11–12, 33–34). The juxtaposition of the controversy about handwashing just before this episode illuminates the parabolic dialogue, since Jesus has just told a parable that his disciples fail to understand until he explains it to them (7:14–22). By contrast, Jesus now tells a parable that the woman understands without the benefit of any explanation. But then she responds to him unexpectedly, like an insider with understanding, without Jesus's teaching. The woman does not interpret the parable; she *explains* it while remaining within the world of the parable, without deciphering the metaphors or interpreting the terms, thereby demonstrating the highest level of understanding. As a result, Jesus judges her positively: her faith and understanding (which the Pharisees and disciples lack) secures her healing. She is not like a dog, a scavenger who "eats" without discernment; rather, she is a true child.

After this healing, Mark includes a geographical marker, such that Jesus returns from Tyre to the Sea of Galilee, by way of Sidon, and heals a deaf and mute man openly in the Decapolis (7:31). A temporal marker connects the second feeding account with Jesus's time in that region: "In those days (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις) when there was *again* (πάλιν) a great crowd without anything to eat" (8:1). It establishes an analogical pattern with the first feeding, thereby drawing comparisons and contrasts. The term "again" presents this episode as a second feeding, now in a gentile setting. The episode thus suggests the enactment of the whole parabolic discourse: Israel may be fed first, but gentiles share the family meal.

The final episode of this section ties together the motifs of those that precede. It begins, "immediately, [Jesus] got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha" (8:10). There, the Pharisees ask for a sign from heaven, yet Jesus has just provided one in the multiplication of

the loaves. Jesus gets into the boat again and travels to the other side of the lake (v. 13). As the third setting in the boat with his disciples this creates an analogical pattern with the first two boat scenes, inviting comparison and evaluation of the disciples' progress (or lack, 4:35–41; 6:47–52). While in the boat, Jesus warns them against the "leaven of the Pharisees" and asks them leading questions about the feeding of the multitude. Their response further reveals how hard their hearts have become and how poor their faculties of perception (8:14–21; cf. 4:9, 12, 23, 33).

In sum, Mark communicates narrative coherence via textual cues that connect events with agents in a temporal and geographical sequence of causal relationship. Narrative coherence is strengthened throughout Mark 6:32–8:21 by the presentation of consistent participants with a consistent object (Jesus and his disciples in the boat) performing consistent actions (retreating from crowds, crossing the sea, teaching and revealing), in a consistent location (around the Sea of Galilee).[63] In addition, textual cues facilitate the retrieval of prior textual information (as noted above), which strengthens the narrative coherence of Mark 6:32–8:21 with preceding material in analogical patterning (parables, boat scenes). Finally, the textual information of this section contributes to the development of what follows. For example, Jesus's growing popularity with the crowds, conflict with the religious authorities, and imperception of the disciples sets in motion the trajectory of events surrounding his arrest, abandonment, and crucifixion (cf., e.g., 11:18; 14:1–2, 10, 26–31, 43–50, 66–72; cf. 3:6, 19).

This analysis demands quite the opposite conclusion to Larsen's unfinished notes (and Bond's patchwork of episodes) which is that Mark 6:32–8:21 hangs together *tightly* as a unified, or coherent narrative text.

3 Implications for Mark's Genre

Mark did what had not been done before (as far as we know) by preserving traditional elements in the form of a story.[64] Yet "narrative text" alone does not indicate Mark's genre; "narrative" is that through which Mark ac-

63 M.A.K. Halliday and R. Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (London: Longman, 1976), 1–30 (on principles of cohesion), 272–296 (on lexical cohesion through reiteration of people, objects, action, and place).

64 W.H. Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul and Q*, Voices in Performance and Text (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 90–131; See also see also E. Eve, *Writing the Gospels: Composition and Memory* (London: SPCK, 2016), 24–28.

complishes the aims of the genre(s) he employs for purposeful communication in a social situation. Thus, it is worth asking what may have prompted Mark to narrate the tradition about Jesus in written form, or to perform this "media innovation among Jesus followers."[65] It may be that the fading of living memory compounded by the aftermath of the crucifixion and the experience or threat of persecution *generated the need* to narrate the tradition.[66] From a cognitive and social standpoint, the medium of writing and the mode of *narrative* aids the Gospel's function as a sense-making resource. Put another way (and riffing on Bruner),[67] Mark organized experiences and memories of human and divine happenings in the form of narrative to communicate meaning and shape identity.

At the outset, Mark announces the "good news" of Jesus the Messiah (Αρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:1). Actual readers may have performed various "top down" genre categorizations by recruiting prototypical ideas from prior knowledge and experience. For example, it is possible that some Roman readers would draw on the mental model of a biography of the philosopher's type.[68] Significantly, however, Mark provides textual cues for "bottom up" categorization by interpreting the opening line according to Israel's scriptures (1:2–3; Isa 40:3; Exod 23:20/Mal 3:1) and the appearance of John the Baptist.[69] Mark thus correlates the "good news" of Jesus's coming as Messiah with Isaiah's "good news" of YHWH's coming as divine warrior to redeem Israel (1:6–7; Isa 40:9–10). These textual cues suggest the narration of some sort of scriptural, eschatological history, framed as "good news."

65 C. Keith, *The Gospel as Manuscript: An Early History of the Jesus Tradition as Material Artifact* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 74.

66 See also Huebenthal, *Reading Mark's Gospel* (see n. 18), 248–253, 256–259, 510–513. For the theoretical underpinnings of collective memory theory, see J. Assmann *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*, trans. D.H. Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 34–41. Besides Huebenthal, others who employ collective memory theory in the study of the Gospels include A. Kirk, "Traditionsbruch," in *Dictionary of the Bible and Ancient Media*, ed. T. Thatcher et al. (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 429–430; Keith, *Gospel as Manuscript* (see n. 65).

67 See n. 18, above.

68 Indeed, early in the narrative, Jesus begins to call disciples, who follow him and whom he teaches, similar to the way a philosopher would call followers. Just because Jesus calls disciples and teaches, however, does not mean that Mark follows this literary model; this could simply be evidence of a common way of teaching in the ancient world.

69 L. Alexander, "What Is a Gospel?," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Gospels*, ed. S.C. Barton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 13–33, observes that Mark (and the other Gospels) can do without a birth narrative, but not without the preaching of John the Baptist.

Additional textual cues contribute to the development of this genre model. For example, when Jesus begins to preach, the evangelist further defines the "good news" introduced in Mark 1:1. There, the genitive Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ could be understood as an objective genitive, that is, the "good news *about* Jesus the Messiah." But then in Mark 1:14–15, the author provides more information, which is that Jesus has come to proclaim the "good news *from* God" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ), about God's imminent reign.[70] Jesus is indispensable to the good news of God's reign because he is God's Messiah who proclaims it and through whom God accomplishes it. But to equate the story of the Gospel or the content of the εὐαγγέλιον with Jesus alone is both too small and a misreading.

Instead, Mark blends a variety genres (e.g., history, biography, apocalypse, prophecy, drama)[71] to narrate a scriptural, apocalyptic-eschatological history which he has framed as "good news."[72] That is, he presents the narrativized εὐαγγέλιον in written form, composed of a network of existing, recognizable genres.[73] This "good news" was promised in scripture before Jesus appeared (1:2–3), is manifested in his preaching and activity (1:14–15), proclaimed by various characters (e.g., 5:18–20), and continues after Jesus's death (8:35; 10:29; 13:9–13; 14:9; cf. 16:15). Thus, Mark narrates the εὐαγγέλιον, not yet a literary genre but a new genre, nonetheless. As εὐαγγέλιον, it is the written proclamation of God's saving activity in and

70 I take this as a genitive of source, in relation to Mark's tie of the opening announcement to Isaiah's "good news."

71 For a discussion of Mark's multi-generic nature, see E.E. Shively, "A Critique of Richard Burridge's Genre Theory: From a One-Dimensional to a Multi-Dimensional Approach to Gospel Genre," in Calhoun, Moessner, and Nicklas, *Literary Criticism* (see n. 12), 97–112, here 110–112.

72 A similar point has been made by A. Yarbro Collins, *Is Mark's Gospel a Life of Jesus? The Question of Genre*, Père Marquette Lecture in Theology (Milwaukee, Wisc.: Marquette University Press, 1990); ead., "Genre and the Gospels," *JR* 75 (1995), 239–246; ead., *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 15–43. See also E.-M. Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelim im Rahmen antiker Historiographie*, WUNT 194 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 51–52, 401–407; ead., *The Birth of Christian History: Memory and Time from Mark to Luke-Acts*, AYBRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 69–76.

73 I am thus not suggesting a return to the days of reading the Gospels apart from the literature of their day. We can account for Mark's narration of the "gospel" as a genre that sprung up *sui generis* but not *ex nihilo*, through combination and change in literary relationship to contemporaneous works. Becker, *Birth of Christian History*, 71–72 (see n. 72), has also suggested that the Gospels are a genre *sui generis* but this is equivalent to an innovative subgenre of history-writing. I suggest, on the other hand, that we view "gospel" as a new framework that encompasses a network of contemporaneous literary genres.

through his Messiah.[74] And as εὐαγγέλιον, the narrative is a communicative event. This is perhaps best conveyed by C.H. Dodd's observation that the noun εὐαγγέλιον (1:1) is tied to the verbal form εὐαγγελίζω ("proclaim the good news," Isa 40:9; 61:1 LXX), so that Mark's encoding of the teaching and preaching of Jesus is akin to "gospelling."[75]

In conclusion, that Mark tells a story is not a discovery of twentieth-century narrative critics, but a matter of cognition and culture. The Gospel of Mark is recognizable as a unified narrative text. Moreover, the coherence of this narrative facilitates the communication of the genre for a purpose: Mark narrates the good news that Jesus proclaimed, which is that God's reign has come through the person and work of his Messiah, and that this historical intervention demands a response and shapes a community. Different social and cultural frames inevitably favor a certain diversity in the reception of the Gospel of Mark; however, the textual cues allow recipients to recognize that the evangelist is narrating a scriptural, apocalyptic-eschatological (hi)story which he summarizes as the εὐαγγέλιον.[76]

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74 Several German scholars embrace the view that Mark is a new genre or subgenre, εὐαγγέλιον, for example, U. Schnelle, *The First One Hundred Years of Christianity: An Introduction to Its History, Literature, and Development*, trans. J. Thompson (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2020), 266–275, 279–280; Becker, *Birth of Christian History* (see n. 72), 71–72; Huebenthal, *Reading Mark's Gospel* (see n. 18), 513; H. Bellen, *Grundzüge der römischen Geschichte*, vol. 2: *Die Kaiserzeit von Augustus bis Diocletian* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998), 95. I have developed my view since writing "Recognizing Penguins: Audience Expectation, Cognitive Genre Theory, and the Ending of Mark's Gospel," *CBQ* 80 (2018), 273–292. There, I view Mark as a genre-network that participates in Greco-Roman biography. I still view Mark as a genre-network, but under the organizing macrostructure of "gospel." See my discussion in Shively, "Critique" (see n. 71).

75 G.H. Twelftree, *The Gospel according to Paul: A Reappraisal* (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 2019), 194–207, builds on the work of C.H. Dodd, A. Deissmann, and M. Dibelius to draw out the implications of Paul's use of the verb εὐαγγελίζω (i.e., he is "gospelling"). See the use of the verb in Rom 1:15; 15:20; 1 Cor 1:17; 9:16, 18; 15:1; 2 Cor 10:16; 11:7; Gal 1:8, 9, 11, 16, 23; 4:13; 1 Thess 3:6. I do not suggest that the content of Mark's "gospelling" is equal to Paul's, but that Mark's narrative mode is a dynamic, rather than static, form of communication.

76 I am grateful to Max Botner and David Johnston for their valuable critique on drafts of this article.